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Vietnam: The Communists are heightening political pressure on the Thieu government.

Madame Binh, the chief Viet Cong negotiator in Paris, has been quick to indicate that the Communists could approve General "Big" Minh's call for a referendum to determine the popular will in South Vietnam if it were confined to the government-held cities. Her remarks also tried to tailor Minh's proposal to fit the Communist claim that South Vietnam's urban population is demanding Thieu's replacement by a "peace cabinet."

In addition, there are signs that the Communists will try to foment street demonstrations against Thieu. A recently dated document captured in III Corps calls for an immediate increase in political agitation in the cities and urges cadres to look to the US example and concentrate on students to get an antiwar movement going. It also declares that any available issue such as taxes, conscription, civil liberties, and the government's new austerity import program should be exploited to get demonstrators into the streets.

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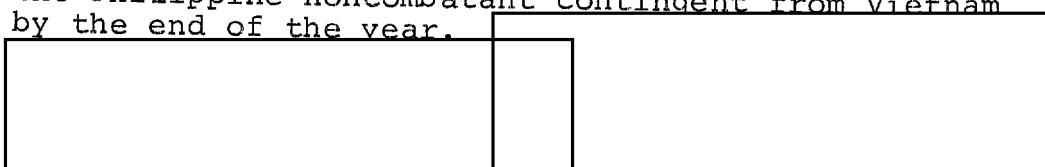
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Philippines: President Marcos made a clean sweep of all 66 provinces in his successful bid for a second term.

His Nacionalista Party, in addition, has tightened its control of Congress, winning seven of the eight Senate seats being contested and taking 86 of the 110 seats in the House. Liberal Party candidate Osmena has with some justification labeled the election the dirtiest in Philippine history, but even without widespread voter coercion and vote tampering, Marcos probably would have won handily. Balloting was heavy, and there was a nearly complete turnout of registered voters in some provinces. Some 65 percent of the vote has been tallied, and it is unlikely that further returns will narrow Marcos' overwhelming margin of victory. Final results will probably not be ready for several weeks.

Vice President Lopez has done even better than the President. His honesty and competence were welcomed by voters who usually have to choose between politicians who are equally corrupt. There has been some postelection violence, fanned by Liberal Party losers, but most Filipinos seem to accept the election results.

Marcos moved quickly after the election to demonstrate his independence of the US. He has informed the US and South Vietnam of a decision to withdraw the Philippine noncombatant contingent from Vietnam by the end of the year.



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Greece: The regime has announced new press laws that discriminate economically against the larger Greek newspapers.

A government spokesman introduced the new laws, presumably designed to assist newspapers with a small circulation, at a news conference on Saturday. These laws continue tax concessions for small newspapers--a number of which are progovernment--but increase taxes on the larger papers by as much as 900 percent. The new legislation also drastically reduces duty-free newsprint to mass circulation dailies.

The Greek regime explains that these measures are designed "to protect the nation from elements that corrupt the soul and abuse the freedom of the press." Six weeks ago, when the government lifted rigid press censorship, it warned publishers against critical comment. Some of the most hostile newspapers are the large-circulation dailies whose owners now see the new laws as economic retaliation for their criticism of the regime.

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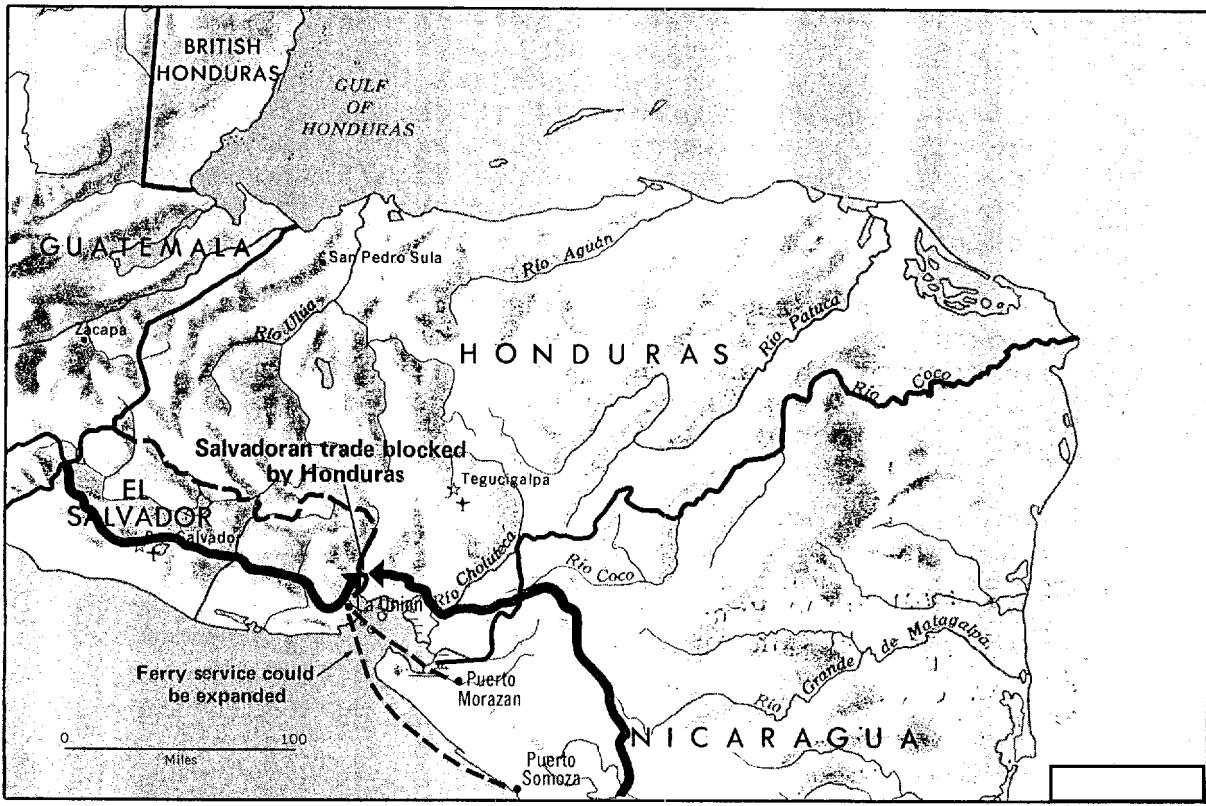
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El Salvador Seeks OAS Assistance For Trade Airlift

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El Salvador: The government will probably request OAS assistance to set up an airlift operation to circumvent Honduran obstruction of Salvadoran trade with Nicaragua and Costa Rica.

OAS officials who met with top Salvadoran Government leaders last week led the Salvadorans to believe that the OAS would respond favorably. The politically troubled Salvadoran Government is now enthusiastic about the project. Although it does not regard the airlift as a permanent solution, it is convinced that it will have a beneficial psychological and economic effect on the country and on the government's political image. Any backsliding on the part of the OAS might lead to an anti-US, anti-OAS backlash.

Honduran leaders are not yet upset about the proposed airlift, probably because they believe it would not be as successful as expanded ferry service between Nicaragua and El Salvador. The Honduran foreign minister said that it might relieve public pressure on Honduras against opening the border to Salvadoran traffic and might also reduce public fear of Salvadoran military action as a consequence of the continued Honduran blockade. He expressed some concern, however, that the airlift might weaken the Honduran bargaining position and stiffen Salvadoran unwillingness to begin border demarcation talks. The danger exists, moreover, that an OAS-sponsored airlift would arouse public feeling in Honduras and lead to additional anti-US, anti-OAS demonstrations.

(Map)

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Chile: The elections at the University of Chile will affect all political factions as the 1970 presidential elections approach.

Dr. Eduardo Boeniger, the government candidate who ran as an independent, won the rectorship on 12 November in a runoff election with the support of conservatives, moderate independents, and Christian Democrats. Boeniger was helped to victory by a majority of the professors whose weighted votes count the most, the abstention of nearly half the students, and infighting among the strong but divided leftists and Communists.

The elections warned the leftists that they must unite to win control of Chile's largest and most important university. They reportedly are burying their differences in order to elect a Communist president of the powerful student federation on 21 November.

This tactical victory for the government is important more for the effect it will have on jockeying for the national elections than as an indicator of their probable outcome. The highly politicized nature of the university makes it an important testing ground for Chile's complicated and shifting politics.

The new rector, who has only a one-year term in which to direct the reform of the university's unwieldy administrative structure, is likely to face a difficult task. Boeniger may have a Socialist in the key office of secretary general. In addition, Marxists and other leftists control several important departments of the university, as well as its influential radio and television operations.

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NOTE

India: Prime Minister Gandhi yesterday easily defeated a no-confidence motion in Parliament introduced by a right-wing opposition party. The opposition was joined by the 65 break-away Congress Party members, led by ex-deputy prime minister Morarji Desai. Support for Mrs. Gandhi from independents and regional, socialist, and Communist parties brought the vote to 306, well over the 262 needed. This ad hoc backing will enable her to head a minority government, but she may have some difficulty in the future trying to accommodate the special and often conflicting interests of her new allies.

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